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SUBJECT: ONE UN PROGRAM IN RWANDA

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¶11. (SBU) The One UN program in Rwanda has taken its first organizational steps. On February 27 and 28, the UN organized a retreat, the first day consisting of UN agencies in Rwanda discussing the prospective program, and the second day including donor governments and Rwandan officials. A resulting Concept Paper, "One UN Delivering as One in Rwanda," was signed by representatives of the various UN agencies resident in Rwanda, as well as representatives of non-resident agencies with current programs here (copy of Concept Paper will be e-mailed to Department and USUN). Note: there are 10 agencies resident at post, four agencies with in-country presence through UNDP, and four non-resident agencies. MONUC and ICTR are not participating in this effort. End note.

¶12. (SBU) Much of what is proposed appears to be non-controversial -- a clearly defined role for the UN Resident Coordinator as the leader of UN programming efforts, the pooling of administrative functions, the erection of a common compound for all agencies to move into, increased donor coordination, and the alignment of individual agency efforts not only with the existing UN Development Assistance Framework, but also with the GOR's Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS), presently still under discussion.

¶13. (SBU) On the subject of individual agency budgets and the prospect for pooled resources, at least initially the Concept Paper envisions a One Budgetary Framework that leaves "core budgets" within the control of each UN agency. A supplemental Pooled Fund, set with close coordination with donors, will be used to "create incentives for agencies to work within the One UN program."

¶14. (SBU) In a discussion with representatives from other donors in Rwanda, several expressed to embassy officers strong support for the UN effort, particularly on efficiency grounds. Dutch and DFID personnel focused on potential gains to be realized through reduced transactions costs and reduced overlap of agency responsibility, including the potential for some UN agencies to cede program responsibility to other UN entities and leave Rwanda.

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